

Abstract of the Disclosure

An apparatus and method for use in a system for handling a flaccid article, such as a sock or other hosiery item, having portions of differing stretch characteristics, by which the differentially stretchable portions may be distinguished from one another by applying a stretching force to one of the portions and then detecting the degree of stretch, resistance to stretch, or other reaction of the stretched portion in response to the stretching force, whereby an indication is derived as to which of the differentially stretchable portions was stretched.

1. An apparatus for use in a system for handling a flaccid article, such as a sock or other hosiery item, having portions of differing stretch characteristics, the apparatus comprising: a stretching member for applying a stretching force to one of the portions; and a detector for detecting the degree of stretch, resistance to stretch, or other reaction of the stretched portion in response to the stretching force, whereby an indication is derived as to which of the differentially stretchable portions was stretched.